

STATINTL

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22 March 1971

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Communications with Youth and Others

1. Doubtless there are many ways to organize the subject of communications. Recent discussions seem to suggest at least three categories. While not clearly defined, the categories may be represented as follows:

a. Passive Communications: This form of communication uses the chain of command to filter information downward throughout the structure. The nature of the information has much to do with policy and procedures, and mission and functions. Part of the current concern, as reflected in discussions, focuses on the adequacy of the information coming out at the end of the pipeline to junior officers. Doubtless this aspect can be improved. It is unlikely though that such effort alone will satisfy communication needs.

b. Active Communications: This form of communication involves an interchange of views and ideas. As far as youth is concerned it is an opportunity for a meaningful exchange, not only of ideas, but beliefs and attitudes. As related to this topic, the exchange is with individuals more senior in age and responsibility. It is this category of communication the Youth Forum attempted to utilize. The use of this category, properly executed, provides for a great deal of satisfaction to participants. The Managerial Grid represents advocacy of this approach. While the approach involves a degree of personal investment, the relationship remains hierarchical -- a feature that is unattractive to some.

c. Participating Communications: This represents a communications situation where what is desired is a piece of the action. Elements of authority, responsibility, and power play a role in the interchange. In communications

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GROUP 1
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with youth this form of interchange has received increasing attention, at times with concern, depending on the reasonableness of the power play.

The dangers, risks, and advantages of this form of communication have been discussed on many occasions. Perhaps the greatest difficulty in utilizing this category is the conviction held by more senior individuals that their own responsibilities were earned through hard work and experience. The idea of entitlement for youth is foreign indeed.

2. In part, the current interest in youth and communications is prompted by the uneasy feeling that times are changing and that the Agency, after all, does have problems. The heat and pressure that occasionally accompanies communications can be construed as indicators of the extent of problems requiring solution.

There is no argument as to presence of Agency problems or the need to discuss them and work on them. It is observed, however, that varying degrees of feeling, conviction, and energy do exist. Attached is a report of an earlier survey on youthful attitudes. While there is room for improvement the record is not discouraging, nor would it by itself prompt the conclusion that an immediate dialogue with youth is required.

3. There is some evidence that other groups, as distinct from youth, are also interested in improving communications. There is even the notion that some youthful officers may be better informed than more senior officers as a result of training efforts and seminars. Perhaps the senior officers course and suggestions for senior meetings reflect such views. And certainly those attending the Midcareer Course find the interchange with officials one of the more rewarding aspects of their experience.

One could go on and discuss the need for better communications among the Directorates or between staff and line functions or among members of the intelligence community. A student on the subject of communications could doubtless point to similar problems in other organizations and other functions. The subject of organizational psychology is heavily laced with references to the inherent difficulties in human communications.

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4. What this paper attempts to point out is that communications with youth is an important subject. For a variety of reasons it attracts a warranted attention at the present time and a search for improvement. It is suggested, though, that there are other needs for communication that are equally important; and that communications with youth fits within a larger context. As such, it may receive its due share of the total attention required.

As a final observation it seems important to recall that under all circumstances the need to know principle in security matters continues to prevail. In our organization there is also a need to know when not to communicate.



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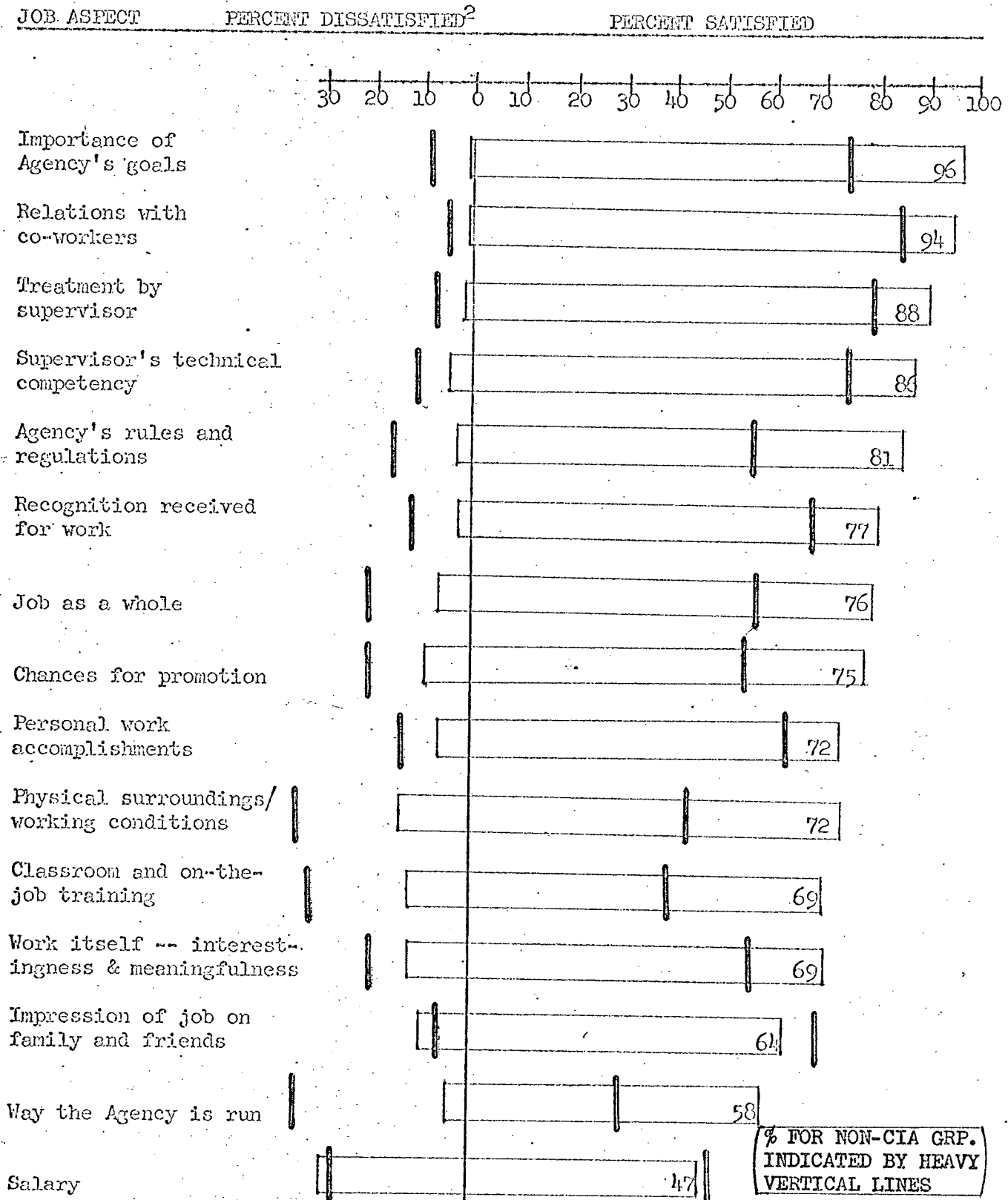
JOHN K. TIETJEN, M.D.
Director of Medical Services

Attachment

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PERCENT OF RECENT CAREER TRAINEE SAMPLE EXPRESSING SATISFACTION AND DISSATISFACTION WITH VARIOUS ASPECTS OF THEIR JOBS



¹The sample consisted of all CTs who entered on duty in FY 1968. Survey data was collected in November 1968.

²Does not include percent responding "About as satisfied as dissatisfied."

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